

# JACANA, WATTLED

## RANGE:

Panama, South America, Caribbean Islands

## HABITAT:

Tropical and subtropical wetlands in coastal areas, savannas and forested areas. Frequents fresh water marshes, lakes and slow-moving rivers, preferring water covered with large floating leafed aquatic plants, such as lily pads.

## SIZE:

**Length:** 9 – 10 inches. (23 – 25.5 cm)

## REPRODUCTION:

- Nest in groups in close proximity to each other
- Females defend territories that may overlap the territories of 2 to 4 males.
- Nests are built of an accumulation of leaves and stems forming a platform on aquatic vegetation.
- Normally 3-4 pale brown eggs are laid at a time.
- Females breed with the several males in her territory and the males do most of the incubating of the eggs and care for the precocial (fully developed) chicks.
- Incubation is 22 – 24 days.

## DIET:

**Wild:** Small fish, aquatic insects, snails, & seeds

**Zoo:** Egg white, softbill diet, insects, millet, & greens

## BEHAVIOR:

- The wattled jacana has long toes and flat feet, adaptations to help them walk on lily pads and water hyacinth leaves. The long toes help distribute their weight over a larger area.
- They are good swimmers
- They are slow flyers, with slow shallow wing flaps, and wings briefly extend above the back as they land.
- Have a loud and harsh call.

## POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Also known as lily-trotters or Jesus birds due to the appearance of walking on water as they stroll across the floating vegetation.
- There is little difference in the coloration of the males and females, but females are generally larger than males.
- They have a spur at the bend of the wing.

## STATUS:

Common

theZOO  
LOUISVILLE

**PHOTO  
COMING  
SOON**

Order:	<b>Charadriiformes</b>
Family:	<b>Jacanidae</b>
Genus:	<b>Jacana</b>
Species:	<b>jacana</b>